

House Republican Press Release

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Rep. Bielawa Calls for Special Session to Address Eminent Domain Issues



Hartford, CT-State Rep. Hank Bielawa, R-2nd, today echoed the call for a special legislative session this summer to limit the state's eminent domain laws that have been used to seize private property and turn it over to developers who then profit from economic development projects.

Legislation that would be considered during the special session is needed due to potential problems resulting from the landmark June 23 U.S. Supreme Court ruling in a case involving New London, CT homeowners, said Rep. Bielawa. The court ruled, 5-4, that the city can seize seven middle-class homes to allow a private developer to build hotel, conference center, offices and upscale housing.

Rep. Bielawa, along with more than 35 House Republican legislators, has co-sponsored legislation to introduce in a special session either later this month or in early August when the legislature is mandated to return to the Capitol to take up matters that were vetoed by Governor M. Jodi Rell during the regular legislative session.

The proposal merely deletes from existing statutes six lines that currently permit development agencies from seizing property for economic development. Local and state governments could still exercise eminent domain to deal with truly blighted properties that pose health or safety hazards or for public works projects including schools roads and other infrastructure improvements.

“The Supreme Court ruling places all private property in jeopardy,” said Rep. Bielawa. “It gives private developers an opportunity to benefit from eminent domain, which was previously only used for municipal or state purposes. The Legislature needs to prevent this from happening anywhere else in Connecticut. The legislation that has been proposed is reasonable and I’m hopeful we can hold a Session to address the issue as soon as possible.”